

THE LARVA OF PYRRHIA UMBRA (HUFN.), THE BORDERED SALLOW, ON YOUNG HAZEL COPPICE — On 1st August 1984 four larvae of the bordered sallow ranging in size from 0.5 to 2.5 cm were beaten from young hazel coppice approx. 1.5 m tall. The bushes were situated in a recently clear-felled area in the centre of Waterperry Wood, Oxfordshire. The larvae ate three young geometrid larvae collected from the same bushes and were reared on hazel (*Corylus avellana* L.) until pupation at the end of August. Moths emerged from 29 to 31 July 1985.

The larva is usually said to feed on restharrow, *Ononis arvensis* and *O. spinosa* (Newman, E. (1869) *An illustrated history of the British butterflies and moths*; Wilson, O.S. (1880) *The larvae of the British Lepidoptera and their foodplants*; Buckler, W. (1886-1901) *The larvae of the British butterflies and moths*; Barrett, C. G. (1895-1904) *The Lepidoptera of the British Isles*; Stokoe, W. J. and Stovin, G. H. T. (1948) *The Caterpillars of the British moths*; Allan, P.B.M. (1949) *Larval foodplants*; South R. (1961) *The moths of the British Isles* and Skinner, B. & Wilson, D. (1984) *A colour identification guide to the moths of the British Isles*). Buckler notes an individual from sallow; South mentions an occasion when larvae were found on young sweet-chestnut growth and Allan mentions "stool oak". Barrett reports that the Rev. J. Hellins (1829-1887) had beaten larvae from both birch and hazel and reared them on those trees.

Mr. J. M. Cambell, of the local biological recording centre at Woodstock Museum informs me that restharrow has never been recorded from Waterperry Wood or any of the neighbouring woods such as Hell Coppice, Shabbington Wood, Stanton Great Wood or Holly Wood, all of which have been covered by recent botanical surveys.

These observations suggest that *umbra* is not simply a specialist on restharrow as might appear from current literature. It is able to feed more widely and may breed in areas where restharrow is not present. This may help to explain its widespread if rather sparing occurrence. P. WARING, Park Farm House, Banbury Road, Kidlington, Oxford OX5 1AH.

POPULATION EXPLOSION OF HYPENA ROSTRALIS L. (BUT-TONED SNOUT) IN THE CHILTERNES — In the Marlow area of Buckinghamshire there has been a remarkable upsurge in the population of *H. rostralis* this autumn. In the very warm September/October which followed a dismal summer, the numbers soared from an average record of 6 or 7 annually to an unprecedented 170 plus, in a wide range of shades and patterns. Of these moths plenty came to sugar and ivy blossom, as is usually the case, but not one was attracted to light, although a m.v. trap was operated regularly in the area. The vast majority were found on over-ripe blackberries, which were exceptionally late (and abundant) this year.